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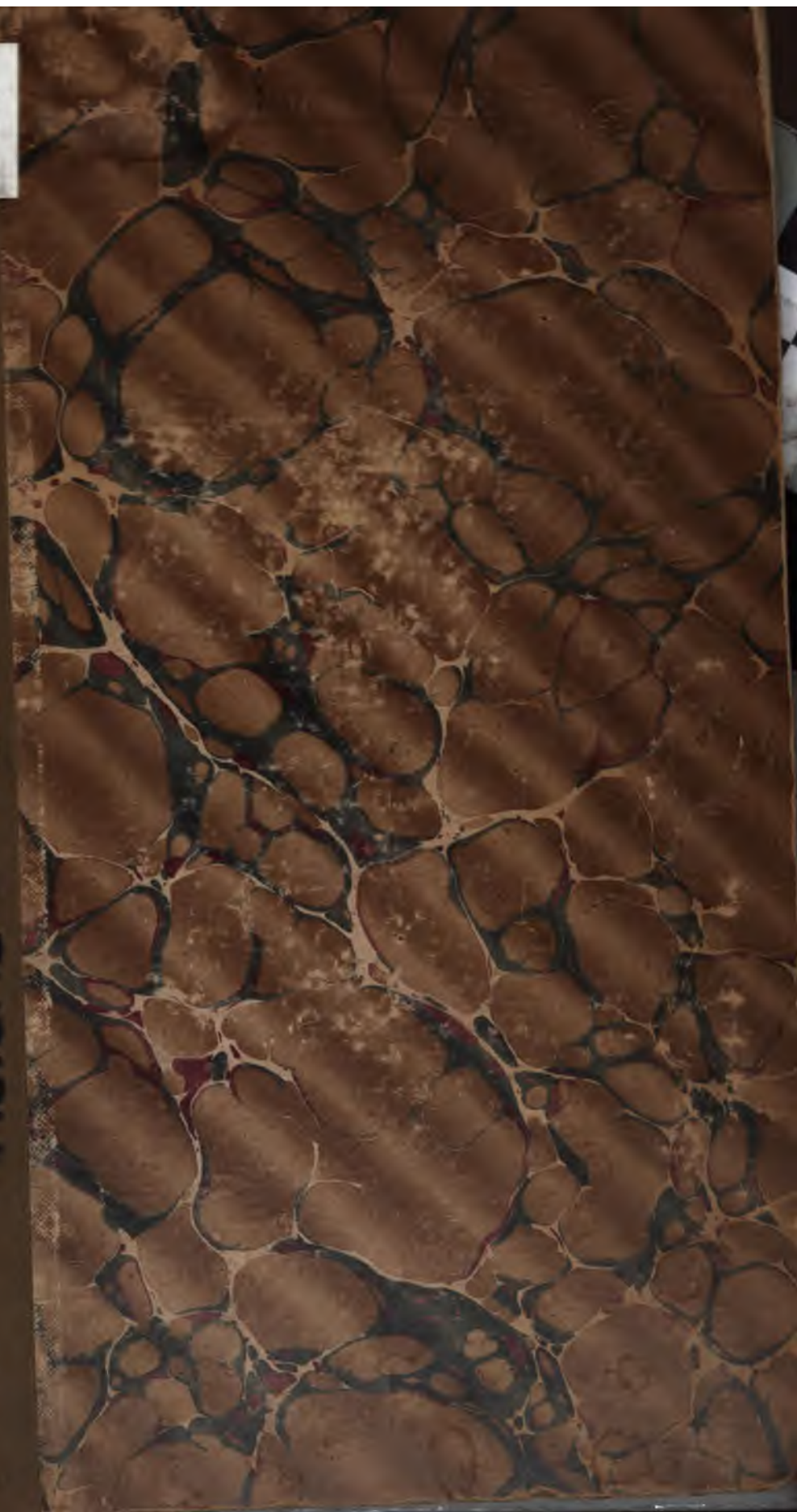
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**Brown - Lesson from Life of Queen
Victoria - 1901**

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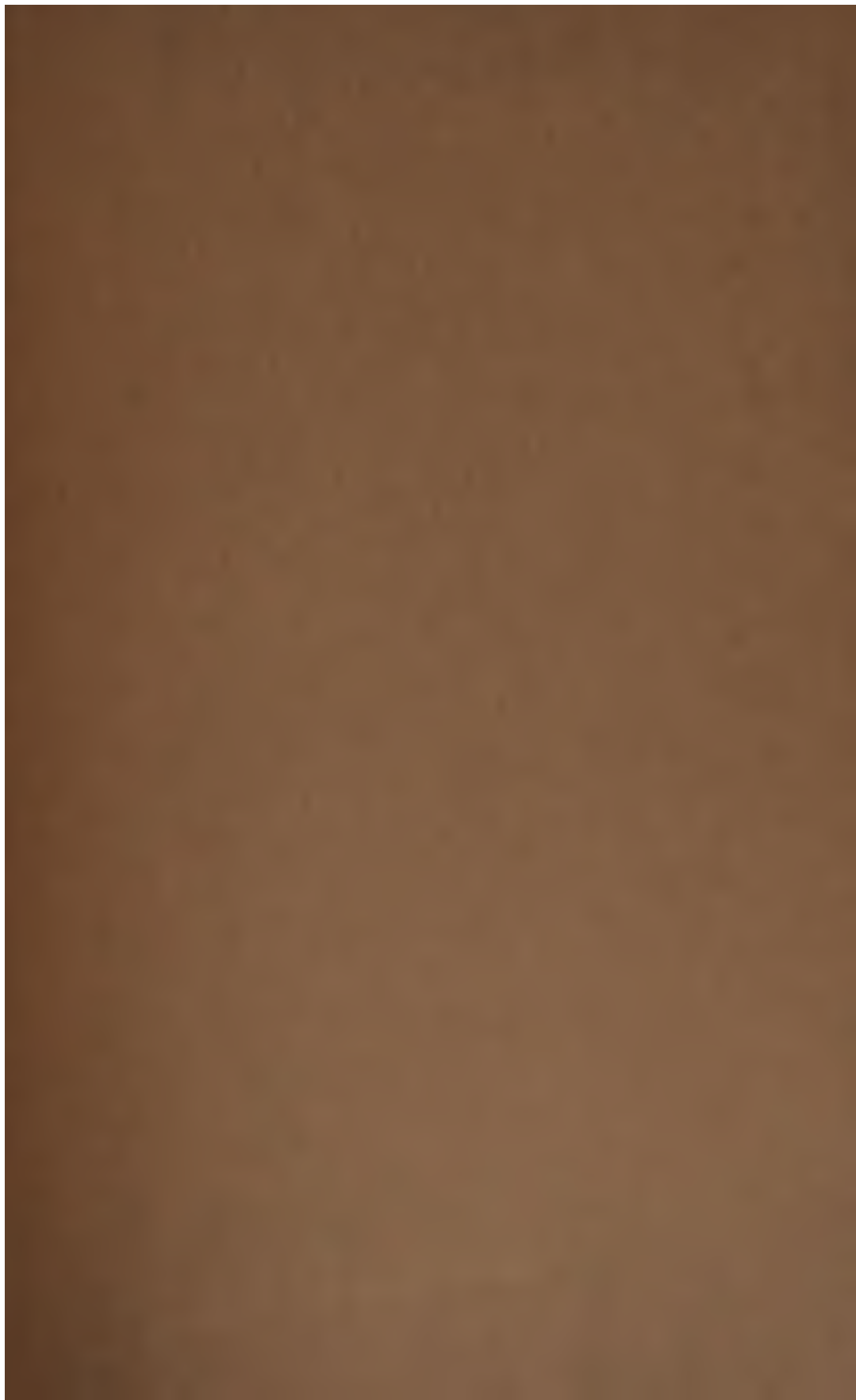
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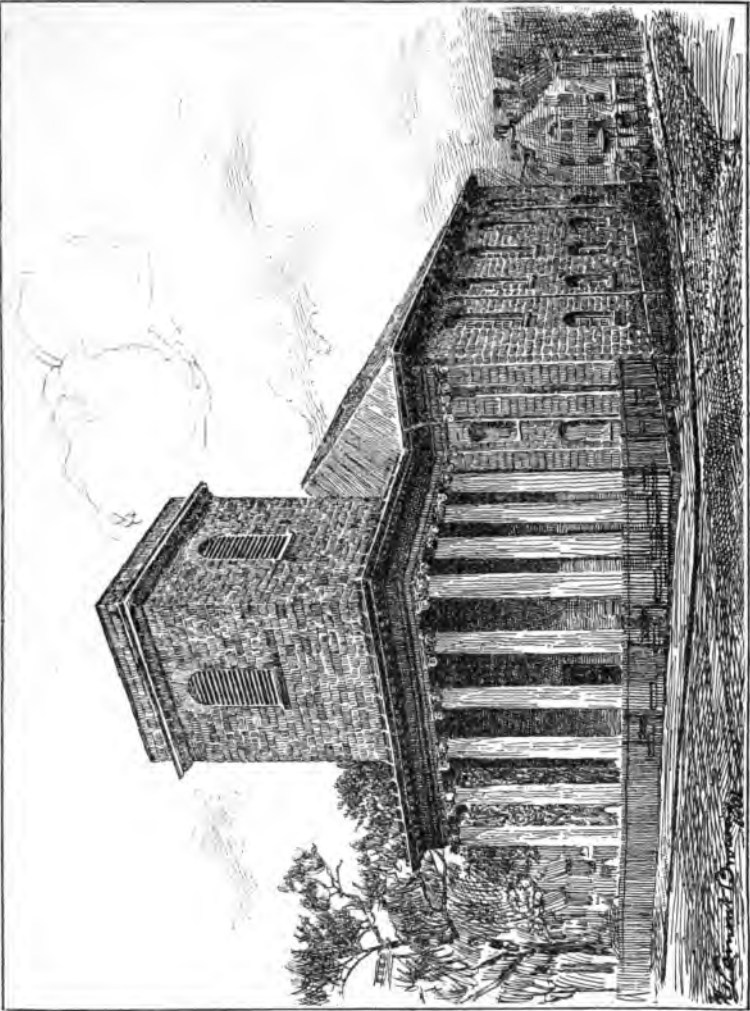
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A LESSON FROM THE LIFE OF
QUEEN VICTORIA
A Sermon delivered in KING'S CHAPEL
JANUARY TWENTY-SEVEN, MDCCCCI
By HOWARD N. BROWN, *Minister*



PRIVATELY PRINTED AT BOSTON
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Memorial Observances in King's Chapel.

EXTRACTS FROM THE RECORDS.

Boston, 1696.—This year Mr Samuell Myles, Pastor of this Church, Returned ffrom England. Hee Arrived July 4th and Brought with him part of the gift of Quene Mary, performed By King William After her Decease, viz: the Church Furniture, which were A Cushion and Cloth for the Pulpit, two Cushions for the Reading Deske, A Carpet for the Allter, All of Crimson Damask with Silke Fringe, one Large Bible, two Large Common-prayer Books, Twelve Lesser Common-prayer Bookes, Linen for the Allter; Also two Surplises, Alter Tabell, 20 y^{des} fine damask.—*King's Chapel Records.*

In 1697 another gift of “too great silver Flagons, and one silver basen, and one sallver and one boul, and one Civer,” was received from King William. After his death, March 8, 1702, the church was draped in mourning. During the reign of Queen Anne it was called Queen's Chapel.

Aug. 1, 1714.—Queen Anne died. Again the wooden church was hung in mourning and changed its name from “Queens” to King's Chapel.

June 11, 1727.—King George the First died.

18th August, 1727.—*Voted,* That the Pulpit and Desk of the King's Chapel be put into Mourning, and also the Communion table.—*King's Chapel Records.*

The pulpit and table here spoken of are still in use.

March 15, 1737–38.—That whereas by Publick Notice from the Government the Melancholy news of the Queen's Death is Confirmed,

Voted, That the Pulpit and Desk be put in Mourning at the Charge of the Church, and that the Church Wardens take care of the same.

Voted, That the Church Wardens wait on Mr Comissary Price and desire him to Preach a Sermon Suitable to the Melancholy occasion.

Voted, That on Thursday, the 23^d ins^t, be a day for Solemnizing the same.

Voted, That the Church Wardens Acquaint his Excellency the Governour and his Hon^r the Leiutenant-Governour, with The Substance of the above votes.

28th March, 1738.—*Voted,* That the Church Wardens be desired to wait on Mr Comissary Price and Return him Thanks for his Sermon Preached at the King's Chapple on ye 23 Ins^t, and Desire he will have it Printed as soon as Conveniently may be.—*King's Chapel Records.*

The above votes relate to the death of Caroline, Queen of George II., who was the great-great-grandmother of Queen Victoria. The sermon delivered by Mr. Price and afterward printed was from the text, "If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?" Psalm xi. 3. It contains many passages which might be applied with great fitness to the life of Queen Victoria.

May 16, 1751.—*Voted*, That ye following Advertisement be printed in ye Newspapers that come out on Monday and Tuesday next, and that the Wardens cause the same to be done:—

ADVERTISEMENT.—Upon the Melancholy News of the Death of his Royal Highness the late Prince of Wales, The Wardens and Vestry of King's Chapel mett and Voted that ye same be Solemnized at King's Chapel on Wednesday ye 22^d Instant. Upon which Ocasion the pulpit will be hung in Black, and a Sermon preached by the Rev^d Mr Caner Suitable to that Solemnity. Divine Servis will begin at 11 o'Clock.—*King's Chapel Records.*

The sermon on this occasion was also printed.

At a meeting of the Vestry of King's Chapel, Legally warn'd and assembled at the house of the Rev^d Mr Caner, Dec. 29, 1760, upon occasion of the News of the death of his Majesty King George the 2^d and the accession of King George the third,—

Voted, that whereas his Excellency the Governour, Council, and house of Rep^{ts} have appointed Thursday, the first day of January next, to be a day for Solemnizing the death of his Late Majesty King George the Second, the same to be accordingly Solemniz'd on said day at King's Chapel, and that the Rev^d Mr Caner be desir'd to preach a Sermon Suitable to the occasion; AND

Whereas it is represented to the Vestry that his Excell^y the Governour is desirous of attending the Service of the Church on the day above mentioned, if it be appointed at an hour compatible with his attendance, it is therefore

Voted, That Mr Church Warden be desir'd to wait on his Excellency and consult him upon that subject.

Agreeable to the foregoing appointment and desire of the Vestry The Rev^d Mr Caner preached a Sermon suitable to the occasion on the first of January above mention'd at King's Chapel, at which his Excellency the Governour, the Council, and house of Representatives, with a numerous audience, were present.—*King's Chapel Records.*

The next day the House of Representatives passed a vote of thanks to Mr. Caner for his sermon, which was afterward printed.

In continuation of the line of precedents above set forth, and in recognition of the ties of kinship still existing between this country and the Motherland, a service was held in King's Chapel on the evening of Feb.

EXTRACTS FROM RECORDS 5

2, 1901, the day of the Queen's funeral. The burial service was read, a brief historical statement was made by the minister of the chapel, and Professor William T. Sedgwick, a member of the congregation, paid an appreciative tribute to the virtues of the late Queen. The two hymns sung upon this occasion were those beginning "Hark! hark, my Soul," and "For all thy saints who from their labors rest."

QUEEN VICTORIA.

"Behold! princes shall rule in judgment, and a man shall be as an hiding place from the wind."—ISA. xxxii. 1, 2.

THE passing from earth of England's good and gracious queen, and the expressions of love and sorrow which have been uttered, like a world-wide chorus of affectionate regret, once more bring to our notice the wonder of those appliances of our life, at this present day, by which all the scattered branches of our human family are brought into close and instant communication. In some ways the tendencies of our mechanical age have seemed distinctly adverse to the free development of the individual life. As the organization of business and society is made more perfect and complete, the single personality is apt to find the range of its activities somewhat narrowed. This is the change which of necessity comes to the pioneer when the march of civilization has overtaken his frontier home, and the broad fields over which he once wandered without restraint are covered by homesteads and farms that restrict his steps to the beaten paths of the common life. Moreover, every person is now taken out of the provincial seclusion where, in earlier days, somewhat alone and apart from the great mass of mankind, he had room for the development of his own individual tastes and whims. We are now forced to live in an atmosphere of publicity, where we are made to feel the great weight of those tides of opinion that prevail with the majority of our fellow-men. It has, therefore, seemed as if the effect upon individual character must be as when a tree, long sheltered from the winds by kindly walls that fenced it in, is suddenly exposed to those nearly constant gales that blow, at certain seasons, across the open sea. As one sees trees along our coast, their branches all bent away from these strong currents of the air, so it appears that men must yield to the enor-

mous strength of those currents of opinion that now play upon them, much to the hindrance of a complete and symmetrical development.

But, in truth, nothing is more difficult than to estimate fairly the total effect upon the world's character of such changes as have taken place during the last half-century. Life is such a many-sided affair that a weakness which appears in one place may be entirely corrected in another quarter. Thus, while from one point of view the wonderful means of communication which now bind all the ends of the earth together may seem to be unfriendly to the individual life, it is worth asking whether from another point of view they do not, at times, add immeasurably to the weight and force of individual influence, and make the single life a larger factor in the world's affairs than ever before. Certainly, the events of this past week give us some right to hold that opinion.

We are sometimes told that the day of great personalities has gone by, and that the day of the common people has come. It is, indeed, the belief of many that the great man has never towered so far above the ordinary level of mankind as the hero-worshipper has supposed; that his reputation for the possession of wonderful gifts has been in large part a myth, and that his elevation to a place of universal renown has come about through favoring circumstances, with which his native fitness has had little to do. This, one must think, is merely an instance of that superficial judgment which does not see far below the surface of things. It is said by a newspaper correspondent that to the country people living about her winter home the Queen of England became no more than an ordinary woman. Very likely that is in part true. In outward appearance she was like many another elderly lady of the higher social class, and there was nothing in her face or in her dress to distinguish her widely from those by whom she was surrounded.

But, if one should so far adopt the opinion of those rustics as to say that the Queen was only an ordinary

woman, that there were thousands of others who, in her place, could have shown equal capacity and could have borne themselves with equal credit, the answer to that statement is that, first and last, there have been a great many queens in this world of ours, only a very small number of whom have, in any faint degree, shown such mental power as she undoubtedly possessed. Most of them have been wholly unable to withstand the temptations of their high position, or have interfered in affairs of state only to complicate still further the tangled problems of national life. It is in itself one of the greatest feats that the human mind can accomplish, to receive for many years the homage of millions, and withstand the suggestions of a foolish vanity. Most of us mortals cannot stand as the supreme figure even in a very little realm, no larger than a church, a household, or a school, without being so puffed up by conceit of our position as to be partly spoiled for the right performance of its duties.

To be the Queen of such an empire as has now been brought under the sovereignty of the English throne, and to bear one's self like the simple-hearted mother of all these lands and peoples, may seem a small thing to the superficial sight, because all great achievements are apt to wear an outward appearance of simplicity and ease. But, when we consider the almost resistless tendency of such high station to produce some unfavorable effect upon the moral nature, the unspoiled womanly heart of this great Queen is noteworthy in the annals of mankind.

There is, perhaps, only one other with whom it is now possible to institute a very close comparison. As a woman, Victoria has far surpassed her illustrious predecessor, Elizabeth. As a politician, it may be more difficult to decide which should bear the palm. A certain astuteness marked the career of the earlier Queen, who held the issue of public events more immediately in her own hands. But the Queen of our own day, though less adroit in the management of men and parties,—having, indeed, small occasion for the exercise of such peculiar

gifts as Elizabeth possessed,—maintained a breadth of view and a disinterested mental poise in dealing with affairs of state that made her, in many respects, the safer counsellor. Her influence upon the destiny of English-speaking people during her reign was, perhaps, not less, and may have been even more than the sum of the personal power brought to bear by the imperious will of Elizabeth to determine the character and position of the English realm.

This woman must certainly be ranked among the nobler characters of history. Not only has she lived in a brilliant and fortunate era, but in herself she is entitled to stand among those who represent our humanity at its highest and its best. By the length of her reign, which indicates an unusual vigor of both body and mind, by the great purity of her life, the kindliness and simplicity of her nature, the unselfishness of her devotion to the public good, and the clearness of her intelligence in dealing with questions of public policy, she has approved herself one of the remarkable women whose names will always stand high in the estimation of mankind.

We sometimes think that there are, walking about among the common people, great poets, great artists, and great rulers of men, the circumstances of whose lives have never sufficed to develop the gift that is in them. This may be true, though it detracts nothing from the just fame of those whose names are inscribed on the roll of greatness. Opportunity is to the mind like the polishing-wheel to the diamond to bring out the lustre that was before but partly seen. Not all the polishing that can be supplied to it, however, will make the common pebble flash those hidden fires; and an uncut gem must rank with things of little worth save for the finished jewels by which its undeveloped values are revealed.

We have beheld, then, in this gracious lady, who has so long stood upon one of the highest summits of the world's greatness, a really noble life, so placed that all its qualities could be most widely seen and known. And now the question is, What effect has it produced upon the

world? How does this present age lend itself to the influence of such an individual life? In comparison with other times, does it appear that the single heart and mind, can do more or less than it has accomplished in the past for the good of mankind? Is the individual, as tried by this standard, a larger or a smaller factor of whatever is being done in the world?

I suppose we must say that in one way, as already intimated, the range of individual power has been shortened. This last Queen of England had no such control over the life and death of her subjects as other sovereigns have possessed. She could not write out her wish and will, and by arbitrary decree make that the law of the land. A system of government had grown up which by slow degrees had taken away from the crown all this absolute authority, till not even the shadow of it was left. And this, no doubt, is typical of a change that has been made throughout all ranks and classes of society. Everybody is more bound by the social mechanism. Nobody, in any station whatever, is quite so free to work his unrestricted will upon either the things or the persons committed to his care.

But in another way and from another point of view, perhaps there has never been a period in the world's history when individual influence might reach so far, and count so much, toward the establishment of righteousness and peace as at the present time. The power of a great life has been somewhat transformed. It is, if the expression will suffice to convey the thought, more spiritual and less mechanical. It has less direct command and control of that network of organizations which has now grown too great to be subjected to the dictation of any single will. At the same time, along the lines of those social and industrial bonds which now cover all the earth, it is possible for a great and good life to make itself felt more widely than ever before.

Simply by living and being what she was, the Queen of England, during the last half-century, has provided one of the strongest bonds of imperial union, by which

different nations can be welded together. The whole fabric of human government rests at last upon the sentiment of the people; and Queen Victoria has quickened in the hearts of millions a power of sentiment, beside which warships and armies are of secondary consequence. As the intellectual development of our race rises to a higher stage, it becomes constantly more difficult to bend the thoughts of men into one common way. But whoever can touch their hearts can still draw them together despite many differences of opinion; and in this fashion the life of Queen Victoria has been one of the most truly imperial forces ever felt among men.

The sentiment of affection for and loyalty to the person of the Queen, which pervaded all ranks of English society, from the great minister of state to the humblest laborer, and which burned nowhere more strongly than in the hearts of men and women who were servants of the empire in distant lands; which also somehow communicated itself to great numbers of those dark-hued races whose spirit naturally rebelled against the imposition of a foreign yoke, and laid a strong grasp upon powerful nations traditionally at war with English interests,—this sentiment “for the Queen,” thus widely diffused throughout the world, has been one of the most wonderful and one of the most beneficent of all good forces entering into the later life of mankind.

What the effect of the removal of this force will be, we must wait to see. Just at this moment, while all the world stands sorrowing, it is something like a new baptism of the spirit that all mankind is receiving. The holy spell of this sorrow will pass away. The steady flow of those rivers of sentiment which have had their origin in this single life, will, for the most part, cease; and we must forebode that other streams which may try to pour their waters into these same channels, will shrink, by comparison, to lamentably small proportions. Still, it is much that the channels themselves have been worn so deep and far. Not all at once will the memory of the Queen cease to be an influence for law and order

and peace among men; and it must be true that to some extent a work of permanent value has been done, which the floods cannot entirely wash away.

These conclusions appear to me to hold truths of great practical value to us all. As we measure what must often seem our personal impotence against the overwhelming power of the world about us, the impression is apt to be one of uselessness and futility in our efforts to improve the common life. Formerly men lived within a narrower circle, where the sum of their influence did not seem so hugely overmatched. Now we have the whole world, as it were, continually under our eye; and to deal with its enormous tides and currents appears too much like sweeping back the waves of the ocean with a broom. But the lessons of the life we have been considering convey a very different impression. It is the impression of a world which, though as stubborn as any giant might be, resisting the puny flourish of hostile strength which some dwarfish personality brings against it, nevertheless yields with as much readiness and eagerness as a patient in the hypnotic sleep to the suggestions of a mind which has won its confidence and trust.

The lower orders of human intelligence do, indeed, appear to move only in great masses. Among them there is little individual capacity to judge what is right, and each man simply adopts as his own the stock of ideas that passes current among his party or his acquaintances and friends. This has always been the state of the case, more or less, and is, perhaps, a little more true to-day, when public sentiment is the chief arbiter of events. But this weakness of the average mind, if such it may be termed, is the opportunity of the stronger intelligence and will. When many are eager only to follow the fashion, there is the opening for those few who have the wit and courage and patience to inaugurate a fashion. Once let a new cause or a new reform be pushed till the impression arises that it is sure to prevail, and the great world, which seems so huge a thing to guide, is in leading-strings almost like a little child.

The promoters of the baser sort of enterprises understand this perfectly, and are, therefore, not easily scared or driven from their schemes. If good men had equally the faith and persistence which the facts of life abundantly justify, this would be, very speedily, a much better world.

The opportunity of the great man or woman has not passed away. On the contrary, never had mankind more need of competent leadership, never was it easier for a mind of exceptional ability to create for itself a following, never did that circle of human life which surrounds each individual soul, and through which it can send some influence for good or evil, lend itself more willingly or completely to the desire and purpose of the single mind. What is true on a wide scale is proportionately true on the narrower scale as well. Once we have grasped the idea that the highest power of a personality is manifested as a spiritual influence, we must see that never has it been possible for the single personality to accomplish so much as in this present day.

Even though the number of independent minds which do their own thinking, is constantly increasing and it becomes more and more impossible for such minds to unite in the profession of one political or religious creed, yet, as if men felt this difficulty, and instinctively sought a way of escape from it, they surrender themselves all the more gladly to a guidance which lays its strong grasp upon their hearts. It is not only the unthinking will follow almost any confident profession of leadership, but the wisest and the strongest will most humbly obey when their affections have been enlisted, and the voice which calls them speaks to the depths of their being, out of the depths of purity, unselfishness, and love.

These lessons which we may draw from observation of the life of our present world do but repeat and emphasize the greater truths which Christianity has always proclaimed. Many times attention has been drawn to the fact that Christ was born in an age and among a peo-

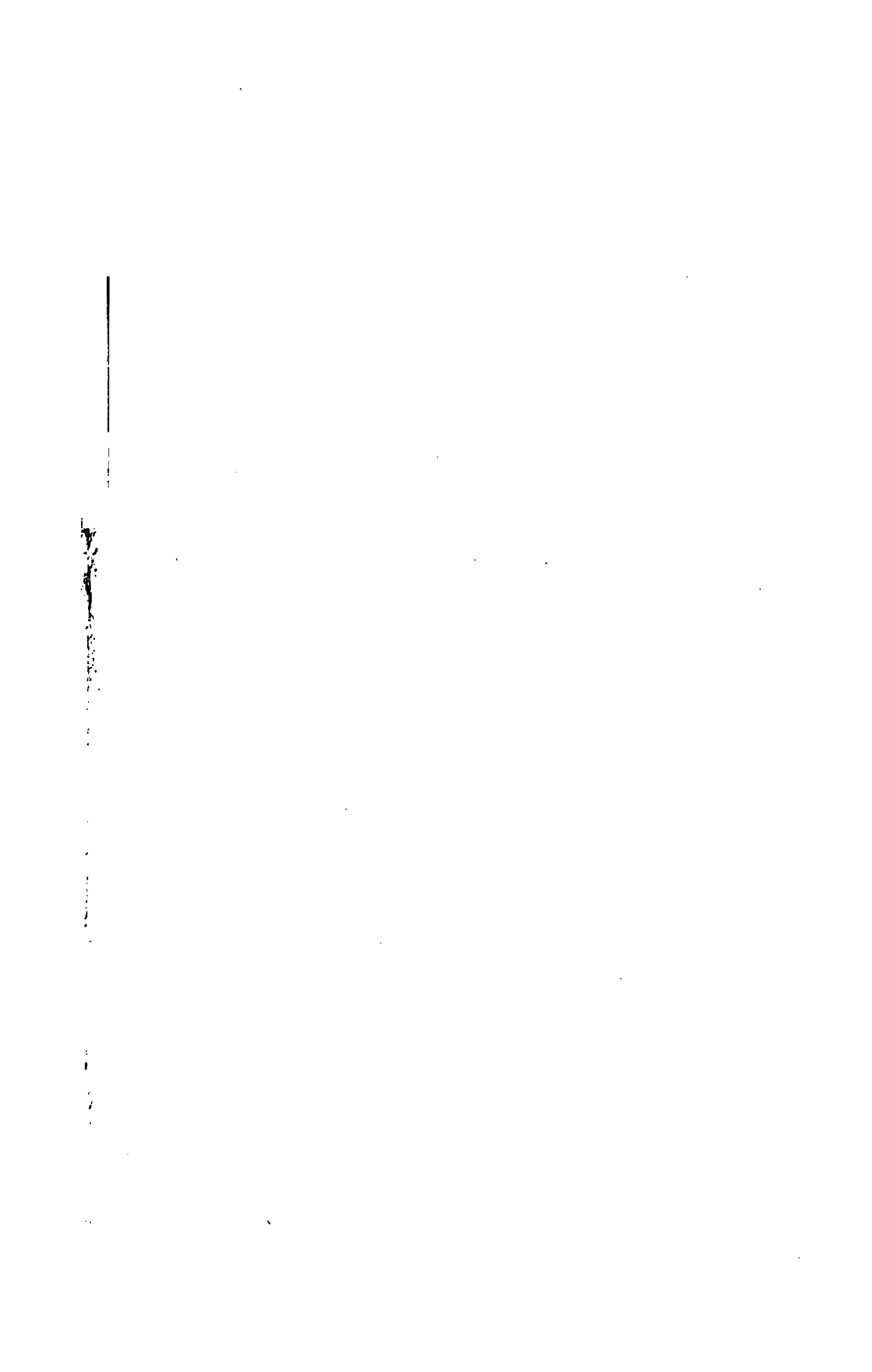
ple which provided in a wonderful way for the publication of his gospel. The highways of the great Roman Empire were the channels along which this new seed was carried far and wide, and the dispersion of the Jews gave it in many places a soil in which to take root. To-day a social organization a thousand times more intricate and complete is at the service of every mind which can set the world a better example or speak to it a higher truth.

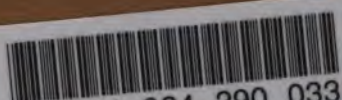
The influence which Christ deliberately chose to impart, and upon which he depended for the world's transformation and salvation, was purely spiritual. It was of the kind which every good woman may exercise, though she holds no public office whatever, and which, in the case of every man, ought to be greater than any power he can wield by his vote. Political action, of necessity, springs out of, registers, and reflects the spiritual condition and development of a people. It is not possible to establish much outward reform till it has first come in the hearts of men; and the communication of a better spirit is, therefore, the foundation on which all the world's good must rest. And this spirit must come from, or must at least be vitalized by, a pure love for God and man. It is perfectly impossible for one who despises mankind to do it any real good. The fatal weakness of a great deal of effort expended for social and political improvement is that it can only be fitly described as an attempt to carry reform by means of a bludgeon. When the teacher arms himself with a club, and goes forth to slay the wicked, he has entirely deserted the method of Christ,—the only method through which much has been accomplished in past ages. You shall hear men argue for peace in a bitterness of spirit that can but be provocative of more strife than already exists.

The good Queen, who was almost as much honored among us as by those who owed political allegiance to her throne, was a true Christian, in that she loved her people, felt their sorrows as her own, and bore upon her heart the sufferings caused by pestilence and war. To that spirit humanity always responds with affection and grati-

tude. He who genuinely loves the world, with a love that is great enough, he, and he alone, can make himself its master. And in every smaller province each one shall become himself a tower of strength, according to the spirit of good-will that is in him. As an hiding place from the wind, a covert from the tempest, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land, so now, and always, is that single life filled with the spirit which was in Christ, that gives itself in unselfish devotion to God's service and the good of man.

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